

Friendship Heights TMD Advisory Committee Meeting

Summary – Meeting of November 13, 2007

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Voting Members Present

Jessica Adams (Vice Chair)
Bob Cope (Chair)
David Glass
Leonard Grant
Leslie Olson
Carlean Russell
Robert Schwarzbart
Jeffrey Slavin
R. Mallory Starr
Garry Tyran
Kenneth Williams

The JBG Companies
Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights
Chevy Chase Village Board of Managers
Friendship Heights Village Council
Chevy Chase Land Company
Saks Fifth Avenue (Employer of greater than 50)
Friendship Heights Village Council
Town of Somerset
Somerset House Management Association
Eagle Bank (Employers of fewer than 50)
GEICO

Non-Voting Members Present

Sandra Brecher

DPWT/Transit Services Division-Commuter Services

TMD Staff Present

David Kantor
Jim Carlson

DPWT/Transit Services Division-Commuter Services
DPWT/Transit Services Division-Commuter Services

Absent

Chief Roy Gordon
Mary Herman
Capt. Russell Hamill
Charles Kines
Gregory Knoop
Steven Robins, Esq.

Chevy Chase Village Police
Polinger Shannon and Luchs (Employer of greater than 50)
Montgomery County Police
M-NCPPC
Oudens + Knoop Architects (Employer of fewer than 50)
Lerch, Early and Brewer, Representing Wisconsin Place

Guests

Stuart Barr
Michele Cornwell
Robert Dalrymple
Robert Kronenberg
Bill McCloskey
Lt. Michael Price
Barbary Taubin

For Steven Robins
Chevy Chase Land Company
Linowes & Blocher
M-NCPPC
Brookdale Resident
Montgomery County Police
Friendship Heights Village Civic Association

Items 1, 2, & 3 – Introductions, Review/Approval of Minutes, Chair's Comments:

Members and guests introduced themselves. October minutes were approved without discussion. Chairman Cope had no comments.

Item 4 – Wisconsin Circle Issues, was temporarily tabled until the arrival of Robert Kronenberg, M-NCPPC.

Item 5 – Taxi Stand Update: Jim Carlson has been working with the Maryland State Highway Administration (MSHA) and the DC government for permission to install way finding signs on the Wisconsin Avenue and Western Avenue sidewalks directing people to the Wisconsin Circle taxi button. MSHA denied the request for the following reasons:

- The state considers the signs non standard – i.e., not the standard color or appearance for the intended purpose; also displayed a business name (EableBank), which is also prohibited.
- Since they were black on white, they appeared as Regulatory Signs, which are enforceable.
- Since the sign would be within the driver's 'cone of vision' but actually intended for pedestrians, there is the possibility for confusion. MSHA wants to minimize clutter along state roads.

The District had not responded by the time of the meeting. However, DDOT's position is likely the same, since their highway engineers refer to the same uniform manual.

Mr. Carlson will pursue using the existing sign on the light pole at the corner of Wisconsin Circle and Wisconsin Avenue, add enough information to point people toward the Circle. Once they get to Wisconsin Circle, they can use the "finger pointing" sign. The process is moving forward and the idea is to put all signs up at the same time, rather than on a piecemeal basis.

Several committee members expressed concern about how long the Taxi Stand pilot project has taken. **Mr. Carlson** stated that since the signs are not yet installed, it is difficult at this time to properly pilot the call button.

Robert Schwarzbart stated that the committee may want to consider a specific date after the signs go up to ensure the pilot is concluded in a timely manner. **Leslie Olson** stated that there was plenty of opportunity to change some existing signs and to put some signs up to direct people to the call button. She also noted that as of November 13th the call button sign still was not posted, and believes that it is not possible to measure the operation of the taxi stand without proper signage.

Item 6 – Pedestrian Safety Issues at the Willard/Wisconsin Avenue Intersection:

The committee discussed pedestrian safety issues at the Willard/Wisconsin Avenue intersection. Committee members noted that this intersection had been the scene of several near misses of pedestrians.

Lt. Michael Price stated that the County Executive is currently conducting a pedestrian safety initiative. **Mr. Cope** suggested writing a letter to State and County officials to request a study of pedestrian safety, and in support of the letter dated May 30, 2007, from the Friendship Heights Village Civic Association, also requesting a review of the intersection.

The motion to write a letter of support for an intersection study was seconded and approved.

Item 7 – TMD Budget Update: **Sande Brecher** stated that the FY09 budget process is moving forward. No one is permitted to discuss details on the budget until it has become

public. Ms. Brecher has attempted to incorporate the funding for various initiatives that the group has expressed interest in.

Mr. Cope requested an analysis of the current FY08 budget for the next meeting.

Item 8 – Updates: **Ms. Brecher** displayed a sketch of the new Commuter Store and discussed the general layout, dimensions, etc. The sketch is similar in most respects to the planned final layout. The developer will complete most of the interior work.

Mr. Cope stated that he had attended a meeting of the planned Wisconsin Place Recreation Center. He noted that the discussion centered primarily on the operational aspects of the Center, adding that there is likely to be an advisory committee appointed – the composition of this group has not yet been decided, but the assumption is that it will be similar to the Friendship Heights TMD group. The projected opening of the Recreation Center is October, 2008. **Mr. Cope** stated he can bring drawings to a future meeting.

Return to Item 4 – Wisconsin Circle Issues: **Mr. Cope** asked **Robert Kronenberg, M-NCPPC**, if the original site plan for the Wisconsin Circle had contemplated that it would be a total no parking zone. **Mr. Kronenberg** stated he did not know if parking on the Circle had been contemplated. In terms of local business' customers standing or stopping for a short time, **Mr. Kronenberg** stated that the brick surfaced area along the Circle was intended to be a "curb activity lane" during the non-peak hours. During peak hours, there should be no stopping, standing or parking.

Item 9 – Other Business: **Brookdale Resident Bill McCloskey** asked if the bus stop across from the McDonald's on Western Avenue would be reopened. **Mr. Carlson** stated he would check with WMATA. Other items discussed were crosswalks and pedestrian signals in the area.

Meeting adjourned at 10 AM.

Next meeting, December 11, 2007.